

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 03958 242042Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10

NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04

SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-15 STR-07 CEA-01 PA-01 SSO-00

INRE-00 ICAE-00 NSCE-00 /078 W

-----099552 242047Z /64

O R 242005Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7568

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USDOC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3958

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, ELAB, NU

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE

REFS: A) MANAGUA 3855, B) MANAGUA 3957

1. WHATEVER PLANS EXISTED FOR A GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE DURING THIS WEEK (AUGUST 23) (SEE REF A) WERE TEMPORARILY OVERCOME BY THE FSLN TAKEOVER OF THE NATIONAL PALACE AND THE HOLDING OF HUNDREDS OF HOSTAGES.

2. HOWEVER, ORLANDO RUIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NICARAGUAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INDICATED TO DOMATT THIS MORNING (AUGUST 24) THA THERE IS STILL SUPPORT FOR THE GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE AND THAT IT MIGHT TAKE PLACE NEXT WEEK. SUPPORT IS COMING "FROM THE BOTTOM", HE INDICATED, ANDIF EMPLOYEES DO NOT COME TO WORK, SHOPS AND INDUSTRIES CANNOT OPEN. HE ALSO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANAGU 03958 242042Z

SAID THAT THERE IS GREATER SUPPORT AMONG MERCHANTS AND INDUSTRIALISTS OUTSIDE MANAGUA THAN AMONG THOSE LOCATED IN THE CAPITAL CITY. THIS IS DUE PRIMARILY TO THE FACT THAT THE OUTLYING CITIES ARE SMALLER AND MORE COMPACT PHYSICALLY, THUS ALLOWING GREATER COMMUNICATION AND COHESION AMONG THE BUSINESSMEN. ALSO, THE COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC SITUATION IS WORSE OUTSIDE MANAGUA.

3. MANY OF THE WEALTHY INDUSTRIALISTS IN MANAUGA HAVE APPARENTLY BECOME VERY NERVOUS SINCE THE FRENTE TAKEOVER OF THE NATIONAL PALACE AND ARE SHYING AWAY FROM A GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE. THEY ARE AFRAID THAT IF SOMOZA LEAVES, THE FRENTE WILL ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER THE GOVERNMENT AND WILL NOT ACCOMMODATE THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

4. ALL THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE ARE SCHEDULED TO MEET ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 27 TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION. ANOTHER AUSEMBLY MAY BE CALLED IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK TO ACTUALLY INITIATE THE GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE IF THE CHAMBERS DECIDE TO SUPPORT ONE. ON AUGUST 23, HOWEVER, THE BROAD OPPOSITION POLITICAL FRON, (FAO) DECIDED TO CALL FOR INDEFINITE GENERAL STRIKE TO BEGIN AUGUST 25. (SEE MANAGUA 3957).

5. COMMENT: EVEN PRIOR TO RECENT FSLN ACTIVITY, SOME INFLUENTIAL BUSINESSMEN WERE DOUBTING THE ADVISABILITY OF A GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE. ALFREDO PELLAS, PRESIDENT OF THE BANCO DE AMERICA AND OWNER OF NICARAGUA SURAG ESTATES, APPROACHED AMB EARLIER THIS WEEK EXPRESSING CONCERN AND SAYING THAT A WORK STOPPAGE WOULD BE A "LOCURA" (MADNESS) AND WOULD BE FATAL TO THE ECONOMY. EVENTS IN RECENT DAYS HAVE UNDOUBTED Y MADE PELLAS AND OTHERS EVEN MORE NERVOUS. HOWEVER, THE CALL FOR CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANAGU 03958 242042Z

INDEFINITE GENERAL STRIKE MADE BY THE FAO, STRONG SUPPORT FOR A GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE AMONG INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES AND SMALLER MERCHANTS, ALONG WITH THE CONTINUING STRIKES IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND HOSPITAL SECTORS AND THE POLITICALIZATION OF CERTAIN SEGMENTS OF THE BANKING SECTOR (SEE REF A) MAY COMBINE TO FORCE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO INITIATE SOME TYPE OF WORK STOPPAGE.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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